

KENDALL GAZETTE

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It's puppy love at Team Metro



Attending Kendall Team Metro's neighborhood "Family Night" on July 20 is 4-month-old Woody, a Basset Hound pup accompanied by Hammocks resident Cherelle Jacob, 20, (right). Smitten by Woody were Team Metro's Geovy Gonzalez (left) and Suzel Cuellar, who advised Jacob they will replace Woody's dog tag when needed next year. (Photo by Richard Yager)

Critical levels of blood supply prompt officials' 'call to action'

BY ROBERT HAMILTON

Leading government officials in South Florida have joined the nationwide call for blood donors, because supplies in the community have dipped to dangerously low levels.

According to Richard R. Gammon, MD, associate medical director at Florida's Blood Centers, the state's largest blood center, a high number of car crashes and other accidents have caused local hospitals and emergency rooms to use an alarming amount of blood.

This situation has prompted Florida's Blood Centers and public officials to call on the community's first-responders, political leaders and citizens to raise awareness about the need for blood and to encourage the community to donate.

"All blood types are in short supply, but O-negative, the most widely used in emergencies, is extremely low," said Dr. Gammon. "Hospital emergencies can use 50 units of O-negative blood for a single car accident victim."

Donors need to know there is an urgent and genuine need for their help.

This is a situation being experienced right now at blood centers across the United States.

"As mayor of Miami-Dade County and the former police director, I know how vital an adequate blood supply is to the health of our community," said Miami-Dade Mayor Carlos Alvarez. "A pint of blood to a person in crisis can be the difference between life and death. I urge anyone who can give to donate regularly and frequently."

A single donation can save up to three lives, and it takes less than an hour. Each donor receives a free "mini physical," which includes a check of blood pressure, cholesterol, iron levels and more. Eligible donors must be in good health, weigh a minimum of 110 pounds, and be age 17 or older. There is no upper age limit for donors meeting all other eligibility requirements.

Interested donors may call 1-888-9-DONATE or visit www.floridabloodcenters.org for more information and the nearest donation location. Florida's Blood Centers area location is at 6840 SW 40 St. (Bird Road), Suite 205; 305-666-2439.

'Summit' to seek support for Kendall Drive transit

BY RICHARD YAGER

A "summit" to generate widespread support of solutions to traffic tie-ups on N. Kendall Drive and within the Kendall community is scheduled for Monday, Aug. 1, 7 p.m., at the Kendall Village Center Meeting Pavilion, 8625 SW 124 Ave.

A list of invited speakers includes state representatives Juan Zapata, Marcello Llorente, Ken Sorenson and David Rivera; Miami-Dade Commission chair Joe Martinez; Commissioner Carlos Gimenez, a member of the Transportation Subcommittee; Commissioner Katy Sorenson, and county transportation officials. Members from both East and West Kendall community councils have indicated they will attend.

Remarks and initiating suggestions will be coordinated with representatives of the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT); Miami-Dade Expressway Authority that supervises five major limited-access highways and toll roads, and Miami-Dade Public Works Department.

"Come and learn what is being proposed and help make sure the solutions are implemented," members and residents are urged within the umbrella of the Kendall Federation of Homeowner Associations (KFHA), according to a distributed flyer.

The "summit" was created by Miles E. Moss, KFHA president and vice chair of a committee monitoring Citizen's Independent Transportation Trust recommendations for 30 years of county improvements, funded by the 2003 voter-approved half-cent sales tax.

In discussing the project, Moss told the *Gazette* that, "While I sit in these transportation meetings, I hear all kinds of official and citizen support for other areas, but no one speaks up for Kendall."

"Managed bus lanes may be the best answer to relieving Kendall traffic," he explained. "There's an effort currently underway in Washington to provide substantial matching funds for such transportation projects, but we need a strong, united effort to make sure Kendall is prioritized to receive such assistance — if and when it becomes available."

Moss said N. Kendall Drive should have a high priority for rail service as well as short-term solutions such as proposed under by a Metropolitan Planning Organization traffic study of Kendall Drive in 2002 that lacked capital funding resources. The report, he added, needs to be quickly updated as a starting point to validate a high Kendall Drive priority for Metrorail or other projects, both short and long-term.

Three other Miami-Dade corridors already are designated for Metrorail expansion, leaving only a fourth extension seen possible under projected 30-year CTC funding. Three others already approved for Metrorail funds include a North Corridor on NW 27th Avenue; MIC Connector from Earlington Heights Station to the Miami Intermodal Center, and an East-West Corridor from MIC to FIU, parallel to SR 836.

"If Kendall doesn't get that last priority, there's no real potential of a rail system serving the area for 30 years or more through Trust funding," Moss noted. "The most vocal support to get that fourth Metrorail line comes either from those who want a South Corridor route paralleling US1, south of Dadeland to Florida City, or the 'Baylink' from downtown Miami to Miami Beach."

Moss, a traffic consulting engineer formerly with the Department of Public Works, contends that a cost-benefit ratio analysis based on the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) study of 2002 using "updated Kendall growth figures would show that the Kendall Corridor would outstrip any other area, based on population increases."

On July 19, Robert Wilcosky, Council 12 appointee to a committee studying South Corridor planning, described six alternative plans including Metrorail, light rail and a multi-unit Diesel rail system on a CSX rail routing to relieve US1 traffic from Dadeland to Florida City.

His comments led chair Jose Valdes to urge Council 12 members and concerned Kendall citizens "to attend the KFHA Summit and find out what's needed to support traffic solutions for Kendall Drive."